
The Newsletter of the Seattle Auxiliary Communication Service

Net Control 101 Essentials of Net Control

By Peter Smith N7BYP (*With much help from Tom Croteau WA9ZSK*)

You never know, one of these Mondays you may be called upon to be a substitute ACS net control operator. Of course, it's also possible that during an emergency event you might be required to set up and control an emergency radio net. Many of us probably haven't had much, if any, experience as net control, so we thought it would be a good idea to go over some basics. Here, then is "Net Control 101." Your "professor of nets" will be our own experienced net control, Tom Croteau WA9ZSK. Recently I talked with Tom about how to run an effective net and here are the results of our discussion. By the way, you'll find the ACS net script in this issue of QRV? Be sure to save it so you'll be ready when asked to take over net. Ok, ready? Here, then, is Net Control 101.

Before Net Begins

This is an important time to get yourself organized and ready to go. After all, when you're busy operating the net, you won't have time to go looking for a pencil and paper. So gather together all the things you'll need.

Tom suggests you have the following ready:

1. The script (You'll need this to start the net!)
2. Clipboard (A handy place to keep your pad of paper and also a good writing surface.)
3. Accurate clock (Be sure to start the net on time, and note when it is ended.)
4. Pad of Paper (For taking notes)
5. Pen (perhaps a spare in case the ink runs out)
6. Glass or bottle of water (Your throat may get dry...)
7. And last, but certainly not least, radio equipment set up and ready to go.

During Net

Start the net on time, then begin by reading the ACS script. As stations check in, record the date, call sign, and name for each. Although it may be helpful to have a list of members and call signs for reference, Tom thinks it's best not to use such lists. During a real emergency event, you probably will not have the luxury of a member list. So the ACS Monday evening net will give you much better, more realistic practice if you check in members without the help of lists. After members have checked in, read the call signs back. This gives participants an opportunity to make corrections if necessary.



Photo by Pete Smith
Tom Croteau WA9ZSK during Monday Evening ACS Net.

See **Net**, page 5

QVR?

QVR? = "Are you prepared?"

*QVR? is the Newsletter of the Seattle
Auxiliary Communication Service*

City of Seattle
Division of Emergency Management

ACS Nets/Simplex Frequencies

Mondays 7:00 p.m.
146.96 MHz
443.00 MHz (tone 141.3 Hz)

Primary/Citywide 146.56
East sector 145.59
West Sector 147.58

ACS Website

[http://www.pan.ci.seattle.wa.us/
seattle/engr/home.htm](http://www.pan.ci.seattle.wa.us/seattle/engr/home.htm)

State & County Nets

Washington State Emergency
Mondays at 6:30 p.m.
Saturdays at 9:00 a.m.
3.987 MHz

King County ARES
Sundays at 8:00 p.m.
145.330 MHz

Please direct inquiries about the
Auxiliary Communication Service to:
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ACS Manager
Seattle EOC
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Seattle, Wa. 98121-1718
voice - 206 684 5027
FAX - 206 470 6715
mark.sheppard@ci.seattle.wa.us

Please direct letters, articles, and
inquiries about QVR? to the editor:
Peter Smith N7BYP
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n7byp@sttl.uswest.net

From the Editor**Thanks, Thanks, Thanks!**

Thanks to all for your encouraging comments on our first issue of QVR? We owe much to those who worked so hard to get the first issue out to you So I'll just take this opportunity to say "Thanks!" to all who wrote articles and sent materials for our first issue. We're especially grateful for the support received from Denise Croysdill, administrative assistant at the EOC who helps duplicate, fold, and get QVR? out to you. Finally, we'd like to acknowledge the fine work of Patricia Frederickson who translates the printed QVR? to its web version. If you haven't checked it out, be sure to do so. (Note the ACS website url at left.) It's a lot more colorful than the printed version! Congrats also to Patricia as our ACS website was showcased by the *911 Daily Showcase*.

ACS Net Script

Please note that on the last pages of this issue, you will find the ACS net script. We put the script on the last page of QVR? so it would be easy for you to tear or cut it out for future reference. Be sure to put it away in a handy spot because you may be called upon to conduct the net one of these Mondays.

Training

We are now in the process of developing a comprehensive training plan for ACS. At the November 15 meeting (see "Marks Message") we'll discuss this plan and its implementation. Your input is absolutely essential if we want our training program to be truly effective. Here's a brief list of the steps we intend to follow in developing our plan.

1. Identify, then describe the roles played by ACS volunteers.
2. Describe requirements and competencies for those roles.
3. Develop goals and objectives.
4. Arrange goals/objectives in order of importance/need.

See **Editor**, page 3

From the EOC

By Jim Mullen, Director
Seattle Emergency Management

Now that you have been welcomed and thanked (I hope appropriately) for your willingness to join with the City of Seattle in its emergency management program, it seems only fair to take a moment to describe the scope of the City's efforts to prepare for and respond to a disaster.

While emergency management has been "on the books" in Seattle for years, there has been a distinguishable emphasis on this activity for the past seven years or so. Back in 1990, the emergency manage-

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ment function was organizationally located in the Seattle Fire Department. Mayor Rice was concerned that too many departments and individuals in key roles in the City were operating in an uncoordinated manner - without some executive prodding, it was evident that emergency management was going to be treated as "Fire's business." The Mayor dealt with this concern by transferring the function into the then Department of Administrative Services (now merged into Executive Services/Finance Department). DAS housed the City's Fleets, Telecommunications, Data Processing, and Facilities Divisions, and as such was viewed as

being able to afford to support a citywide function, as the Mayor intended emergency management to become.

Through 1996, Emergency Management developed into an acknowledged and valued player in the preparation, response, recovery, and mitigation activities of the City. From one Director and a secretary in 1990, the staff has expanded to include five professional staff and two very professional secretaries.

In the intervening years a number of accomplishments can be noted: we have successfully responded to every event that has come our way. That is not to say that all has gone well, but it is fair to say that we have been increasingly successful at attacking problems, and each event has been handled better than prior ones. We have written a comprehensive disaster plan (which is due for revision), and we have established an excellent emergency communications system of which ACS is a very significant part. We have introduced an aggressive outreach program to involve citizens in preparing themselves and their families to sustain themselves during the initial stages of a disaster. We have retained executive and council support and maintained our credibility by acknowledging our shortcomings and addressing needed improvements. We have begun to develop some significant expertise on recovery and mitigations issues, and have made major inroads in articulating the need for citywide recognition of recovery as a critical function. We have also been aggressive and innovative in approaching the information management and processing issues which are so crucial to making the correct decisions, in a timely manner, in an emergency. We've done a lot, and here is a little information about some of the people who are working to improve the City's capabilities.

Community Preparedness Program (Seattle Disaster Aid and Response Teams, or SDART). Coordinator: LuAn Johnson, assisted by Evelyn Mitchell (this is a rapidly expanding group of volunteers who form the City's first line of response in the event a major disaster disrupts normal emergency procedures. Literally thousands of residents are served by this program, and ACS is a vital communications

link between them and the City.)

Operations and Training. Coordinator:
Steve Marten

Recovery and Mitigation. Coordinator:
Steve Brown

Technology/Emergency Support
Systems Development. Coordinator:
T.J. McDonald

Office Management Support: Denise
Croysdill

Auxiliary Services Coordinator: Mark Sheppard (though a volunteer with a day job, Mark is our Communications Systems Coordinator and our primary link to you).

The Emergency Operations Center, which has been in existence at its present location for over six years, is a work in progress. It is activated on the average of four times a year, and is used for training and ongoing meetings of the City's Disaster Management Committee, an interdisciplinary Committee established to provide oversight and direction to the City's emergency management program, and advice to the Mayor regarding the state of the city's preparedness. These same people are the initial responders to the EOC during an emergency, so they remain current with policy and procedures that are in force.

I hope that if you are here for an emergency, or even if you are in the field during an event, this will give you a better idea of who we are and what program you are a part of. We are fairly self-critical following events, and we encourage others to follow suit, because that is how we improve.

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Editor, from page 2

5. Design and carry out instruction and assessment processes.

Looking ahead, the next issue of QRV? (winter) will be devoted to training. "Stay tuned" to QRV? for more information on training, and please be sure to communicate your ideas on training back to us.

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Mark's Message

By Mark Sheppard, N7LYE

I hope that all had an enjoyable Summer and took advantage of the very pleasant weather we experienced here in the Northwest. It was a good time for traveling, enjoying our City and hopefully completing those projects preparing us for the bad weather that is now coming upon us. I hope we all completed those antenna projects... I have several brief announcements and comments for this issue of QRV?.

General Membership Meeting

Our Seattle ACS team has not met in quite some time. We have had several new members join the organization and this would be a good opportunity to get all the members together. We would like to discuss several topics and focus a significant amount of our attention on the review of our training plan which is currently under development. It will be a good opportunity to update ID photos and cards as well as a time to discuss your current assignment or perhaps what new or broader role you may want to consider with ACS.

The meeting will be Saturday Morning November 15, beginning at 9:00 am with a Training Session Resource acquisition and Logistics -- Asking for Help. The objective of the training is to maximize the efficiency of radio communications. The Training will be presented by Dave Kerrigan, Director of Fleet Services for the City. The training is jointly sponsored by the Medical Services Team and Seattle ACS. Our general membership meeting will follow beginning at approximately 10:30 AM and run to 12:00. Location is the Seattle EOC, located at 2320 4th Ave. in the Fire Station at Fourth and Battery. Please come early so we can get everyone in through the security door and seated. Talk in frequency will be 146.42 and 443.00 Repeater (141.3 Hz.)

See Message, page 4



**Don't forget ACS
meeting: 11/15, 9-12,
at the Seattle EOC**

Message, from page 2

Digital Data Radio

In addition to developing a training plan, digital communications was a high priority that came out of our de-briefing report following last June's "Sea-Shake" communications exercise. Steve Baer, KC7FLP has joined Seattle ACS and will be working to compliment the good work that Steve Monsey, N0FPF has initiated in building a simple packet network to allow us to communicate with Community Centers. These facilities serve as the neighborhood hubs for coordinating the Seattle Disaster Aid & Response Team (SDART) activities. Our initial strategy is to locate a powerful packet transceiver with a mail box on a high point in the City and use this to collect messages from the many community sites and then forward to the Seattle EOC or other City facility. A follow on project will be to build a more sophisticated network which will allow higher message volumes and easier network access as well as logical message routing.

Steve will be working to bring the network up this Winter and will help us specify operating standards as well as equipment and software guidelines for ACS members so we can begin building portable packet stations that will be ready to go in times of emergency. Also, we need to agree on a common operating frequency. It is our plan to keep the packet network up and running at all times at to use it for general ACS and Ham news as well as notification of pending ACS events and activations.

Assignments

We are looking for assistance with a couple of key assignments to help with the administration and support of the ACS organization. We need someone to manage the membership system, manage the data base, coordinate the photo ID system and administer the paging system. We are also looking for a few folks to monitor and serve as control operators for our repeaters. If you are interested in helping out in one of these or other areas, please give me a call or send an e-mail. (see contact info located elsewhere in the news letter).

73's for now - hope to see you at our meeting on November 15, and on our regular Monday evening net.

Personal Profiles: Tom Croteau WA9ZSK

Like many of us, Tom got his start in amateur radio as a shortwave listener. But he was certainly not passive in this hobby. He modified his radio's tuning condenser to receive am broadcasts from hams using the 160 meter band. Tom continued to

Tom has always had an interest in public service, first helping out in severe weather situations in Minnesota, eventually joining our ACS organization here in Seattle. He currently serves as our faithful and efficient net control during the Monday evening ACS nets. For a number of years, Tom also has been the system engineer for the Puget Sound Repeater Group, the organization that governs the use of our familiar 146.69 repeater.

Because VHF and UHF are easier to set up and enjoy within the limited space of



Tom Croteau WA9ZSK.

Photo by Pete Smith

experiment with radio eventually building an 8 watt cw transmitter from discarded TV parts. This project won him first prize at his eight grade science fair.

***"Tom continued
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cw transmitter .."***

apartments, Tom has concentrated on these bands. He uses an faithful, older HT that has given him much good service over the years and has recently put up a 2 meter ringo antenna at the apartment. As for ham radio resources, Tom recommends the good old ARRL Handbook, a comprehensive source of useful information.

In addition to radio, Tom enjoys cross country skiing, nature photography, backpacking, and winter camping. He's been on trails from Monte Cristo to Mt. Rainier, to Discovery park in Magnolia! Congratulations are also in order as Tom just completed the Computer Network Technology program at North Seattle Community College.

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Personal Profiles:

Ray Stommel

N7QAK

Ray Stommel (N7QAK) is one of our ACS members who lives in the north Seattle area. Like Tom, Ray also began his ham career as a shortwave listener, in Ray's case, Boise Idaho. In high school, Ray studied hard for this ham ticket but just missed getting it because of great world events. You see, Ray was all ready to take the test when the United States entered World War II. The government shut down ham operations for the duration. After the war, Ray didn't seriously follow his radio interests again until about twelve years ago when he renewed his interests in shortwave listening. This led to Ray's receiving his amateur license in 1990.

In a similar way to many ACS members, Ray became aware of our organiza-

spot. Your editor was happy to note that one of Ray's many talents is in technical writing. This may be of great benefit to us as we develop training materials for ACS.

Rag chewing on all bands is one of Ray's favorite ham pastimes. He is active in a group that meets regularly on the 145.19 repeater in Mt. Vernon. That re-

"Ray chuckled as he recounted the pile-ups he caused when he keyed up his HT and gave his call sign in New Zealand!"

VHF HT's, and a Kenwood TS930s for HF operations complete his shack lineup. Oops, I almost forgot my favorite, Ray's pristine condition Hallicrafters S85 general coverage receiver! As for antennas, in addition to the quad, his "farm" includes a Cushcraft AR270 for VHF, a Cushcraft R5 for HF, and a dipole that Ray intends to reinstall in the high trees behind his home. Like many of us, Ray enjoys chasing HF dx and has worked over 150 foreign stations. As you can probably guess by now, Ray is eagerly awaiting the return of good propagation.

Ham radio resources that Ray uses include QST, and the internet. One of his favorite radio sites is www.hamradio-online.com/.

Besides ham radio, Ray is an avid photographer and has a collection of old cameras. He also enjoys world travels. Ray chuckled as he recounted the pile-ups he caused when he keyed up his HT and gave his call sign in New Zealand! Ray has also traveled to Tahiti and Russia. Radio bands aren't the only bands Ray enjoys. Included also the big bands of the 30's, 40's, and 50's. He has an extensive collection of records and cd's.

As for a favorite Seattle spot, Ray suggested the Museum of Flight. He is a charter member. ■■■■■

Net, from page 1

After Net

Tom keeps a chronological record of all the Monday night ACS nets. If you are called upon to be net control for the regular Monday evening ACS net, be sure to send the list of check-ins to Tom so he can keep his records complete. In the event of an actual emergency situation, you should send records of check-ins and message traffic to Mark Sheppard N7LYE.

General Suggestions

As you can probably tell by the information given so far, organization is really

See Net, page 6



Photo by Pete Smith

Ray Stommel N7QAK.

tion through an SDART presentation at the Ballard Community Center. Since he's always been interested in giving back to his community, Ray signed up on the

peater is reached via a 2 meter, four element quad mounted on the roof of his home. His VHF radio is an ICOM 275H, all mode transceiver. Several UHF and

Best of the Rest

The "Best of the Rest" this time comes courtesy of Ray Stommel. He sent this first-person account of an earthquake. As you read it, think about your own situation and what precautions you might take now to protect your home and family. Here's Ray's introduction...

A former Northwest resident now lives north of Los Angeles. His home is about five miles from the epicenter of the huge Northridge earthquake of January 1994. The following paragraphs are excerpts from a "round-robin" letter he sent to friends and relatives two days after the quake.

It was Monday, January 17, at 4:31 AM when our bed began to shake violently, throwing Jane and I all around. I

under the bed, happily still in one piece. Annie went out to her car, and brought in another flashlight, and we found some candles.

Now it was time to assess the damage, by flashlight and candlelight. First stop was the living room, where the TV was lying on its face on the floor. The VCR was upside down, halfway across the room. A chest was tipped over, and another chest had spewed out its drawers, with the contents all over the floor. Our wall furnace had ejected its grate on the floor. Of the dozen or so wall-hung pictures, six remained (why, I don't know). Lamps were down everywhere.

The kitchen was an awful sight. Every cabinet on both sides had dumped its contents on the floor, and much was broken. Later, Annie spent a full day cleaning up the mess. Worst, no way to make coffee! Eventually, I fired up Annie's grill by candlelight and boiled some bottled water. I think we also ate some-

of other people in this area who have suffered far more than we have.

After reading this account, I went out and bought water heater restraint straps and installed them right away. I also plan to check other possible problem areas around my house - ed. ■■■■■

Emergency Communications on the Web

Our featured Internet resource is the Washington State ARES/RACES website. The url is: <http://www.sinclair.net/ares/>. Be sure to check it out and you'll find useful information in the following categories: State ARES/RACES Officials - Who they are and how to contact them
City & County Information - City/County ARES/RACES Web Sites
Washington State Emergency Net - Times, Frequencies, Preamble & Roster
ARES & RACES - Definitions, Purpose, Organization
Documents - RACES Plan, Communications Plans, Training Schedule
Regional Map- Fire Defense Regions / ARES Districts
Digital Modes - Pactor HF Network, Packet information
Links - To related sites, such as State Emergency Management ■■■■■

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essential in running a net. Having the necessary equipment and material close at hand is also important. It isn't always necessary to have a powerful transmitter and base antenna to be net control, however. It all depends on how you are accessing the repeater. If you are in a good location, an HT can do the job very well.

One final suggestion is that, as much as possible, you should try to keep your radio with you at all times, at work, home, shopping, etc. If you have your radio close at hand, you'll be able to respond quickly in an emergency. ■■■■■

"To you who have not experienced big earthquakes, let me explain that they also are NOISY."

emphasize the word "violently." To you who have not experienced big earthquakes, let me explain that they also are NOISY. The house gets distorted, and it creaks and groans. The windows rattle, and everything loose crashes and bangs. Furniture and appliances fall over or slide around. Outside the house there is a roar I can't describe or explain, but it is loud. All of these things were going on simultaneously.

After the first violent two or three minutes, we made sure that both of us were uninjured, then yelled to daughter Annie in the next bedroom, and fortunately she was OK. My glasses had been on a bedside table, but were gone now. I forbade Jane from walking around until the all-important specs were located. I carefully crept into the kitchen, walking over debris, until I found a flashlight. My glasses showed up

thing, but I'm not positive.

Throughout the house, it was the same story -- drawers and cabinets open, and stuff on the floor. Our biggest problem is the water heater. It rests on its side on the floor. So - no lights, no water, no gas, no phone, no TV and only six candles. Fortunately, we had a battery radio that still worked, and that was our only source of information, bad as it was.

We are very fortunate that power and water have now been restored, as I type this letter. Much of Greater L.A. is not so lucky. We hear the quake was 6.6 Richter, and several aftershocks have been over 5.0. Anything over 4.0 you can definitely feel.

It will be quite awhile before we get our house put back together, but our problems seem small compared to thousands

ACS Radio Net Script

November 1997

Good evening, this is (your name, your callsign). Welcome to the Auxiliary Communications Service radio net.

The Auxiliary Communication Service (or A.C.S.) is the combination of (A.R.E.S.) Amateur Radio Emergency Service, and (R.A.C.E.S), Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service.

We would like to thank the Puget Sound Repeater Group for the shared use of this frequency, now, and in times of emergencies.

This net meets every Monday evening at 7 p.m., which for clarity is 19:00 hours local time, here on the PSRG Repeater, 146.960 MHz. with a negative offset of 600 KHz. No sub audible tone is required for access.

In the event of repeater failure we will meet here on the repeater output: 146.96 MHz. simplex: no transmit offset. Our auxiliary frequency is 146.56 MHz simplex, no offset.

This net meets to be of service to our communities in the City of Seattle, to exchange information relating to ACS responsibilities, to support the Seattle Disaster Aid and Response Teams, and to keep ACS members in practice with emergency preparedness.

Please keep all transmissions less than 30 seconds, and leave a pause between transmissions for stations to break in. Breaking stations please give your call sign only, and then wait to be recognized by net control.

In order to facilitate the Seattle teams in getting to know each other, please give us your call, your first name, and the neighborhood you live in.

You may list any business you have for the net at that time, and net control will get back to you when it is time to share any business or announcements.

Is there any emergency or priority traffic for the net?

This is (call sign). My name is (name). I'm located in (location) not taking leadership station check-ins, please come now with your call, name, and location.

Now taking membership station check-ins, please come now with your call, name, and location.

We would like to invite King County ARES or RACES leadership stations to check in with us this evening, please come now with your call, name, and location.

We would like to invite any A.R.R.L. or O.E.M. stations to check in with us this evening, please come now with your call, name, and location.

We would like to welcome any visitor stations this evening. If you would like to check-in, please come now with your call, name, and location.

We will now have announcements: (name, call sign) Please come now with your announcement.

To receive the newsletter and information about A.C.S. you can contact Mark N7LYE by his voice mail at 684-5027,
or by e-mail at: mark.Sheppard@ci.Seattle.wa.us,

or visit our home page at <http://www.pan.ci.seattle.wa.us/Seattle/engr/home.htm>

We would like to invite you to check into the King County ARES net, Sunday evenings at 8 p.m. on the 145.33 MHz BEARS Repeater. Or if you have H.F. capability, the State ARES net is on 3.987 MHz just one half hour before this net on 80 meters.

We would like to invite all who are listening to this net to join the PSRG members at 7:30 for the airing of Newsline: an amateur radio news service and to participate by checking into the PSRG net.

Again we would like to thank the Puget Sound Repeaters Group for the shared use of this frequency, now, and in times of emergencies.

Thank you all for your participation in the ACS net, and for keeping yourself and your equipment prepared to be of service to our communities in the city of Seattle.

Please stay tuned for Newsline and the Puget Sound Repeater Group Net coming up shortly.

This is (name, callsign) closing the net at (--:--) hours. 73 and good evening.

QRV?

City of Seattle

Department of Administrative Services

Emergency Management Division

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Seattle, WA 98121-1718